



## **ASECNA teams up with Thales Alenia Space and NIGCOMSAT to continue the development of SBAS services for a broader range of business sectors in Africa, backed by Geoflex**

***The partners are jointly organizing demonstrations of these services in Brazzaville, Congo***

**Brazzaville, July 9, 2021** - The Agency for Air Navigation Safety in Africa and Madagascar (ASECNA), Nigerian Communications Satellite Ltd. (NIGCOMSAT) and Thales Alenia Space, the joint venture between Thales (67%) and Leonardo (33%), are working together to accelerate the development of additional satellite services provided by ASECNA's A-SBAS (Satellite-Based Augmentation System) for Africa and the Indian Ocean to deliver precise point positioning (PPP, CNES/Geoflex) and danger warnings for a wide range of applications in Africa.

The three partners successfully demonstrated the additional services provided by A-SBAS on July 7 and 8, 2021, by calling on the SBAS signal they have broadcast over the Africa & Indian Ocean (AFI) region since September 2020 to provide the first SBAS open service in this part of the world via the NigComSat-1R satellite. This trial follows successful flight demonstrations in January 2021 in Lomé and the following June in Douala.

The first demonstration of the special urgent situation warning service via satellite showed the system's ability to broadcast a warning message via the A-SBAS signal to mobile phones, without requiring a terrestrial network. This service sends a message to the populations concerned, providing information on the type of danger and instructions to be followed.

The second demonstration entailed the transmission of GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) corrections based on CNES/Geoflex PPS technology and also using the A-SBAS signal. This approach showed the system's ability to achieve positioning accuracy to within centimeters across the entire African continent. A world first, this satellite service paves the way for applications in a broad range of sectors, including precision agriculture, land and maritime transport, rail safety, drone navigation, mapping and surveying.

A seminar was also organized on July 6, 7 and 9 in Brazzaville to raise awareness of SBAS services in Africa. It was organized in conjunction with EGNOS-Africa JPO (Joint Program Office) and was attended by about 100 national and international experts.

*"The demo in Brazzaville, Congo is in line with our desire to bring to the fore the numerous disruptive applications of SBAS technology utilizing precise point positioning (PPP) and warnings alerts in digitalized economy across many sectors especially in non-aviation sector such as maritime, rail, survey, civil engineering, oil & gas, precision agriculture, security of strategic national infrastructure, mass-market applications among others", declared Dr. Abimbola Alale, MD/CEO of NIGCOMSAT Ltd. "It follows the policy direction of the Hon. Minister of Communications and Digital Economy, Dr. Isa Ali Ibrahim (Pantami) FNCS, FBCS, FIIM, in utilization of NIGCOMSAT-1R for a digitalized economy for sustainable development in the continent."*

*"Thales Alenia Space is the ideal partner to support Africa's efforts to implement its own SBAS system, based on our proven expertise in developing SBAS systems in Europe (EGNOS<sup>1</sup>) and South Korea (KASS)," said Benoit Broudy, Vice President, Navigation Business at Thales Alenia Space "This latest demonstration*

*proved the ability of SBAS to transmit a warning about an imminent danger to the populations concerned and thus enhance their safety. A number of sectors, including agriculture and transport, will benefit from these precise satellite positioning services, accurate to within centimeters – and we have already proven their effectiveness. This latest success will help accelerate the rollout of SBAS and associated services in Africa.”*

*“I’m proud that ASECNA was able to demonstrate the utility and efficiency of SBAS services on our continent for all business sectors, and not just air transport,” said Mohamed Moussa, Director General of ASECNA. “The upcoming deployment of the ‘SBAS for Africa & Indian Ocean’ system, a navigation and positioning solution for Africa and by Africa, will make a significant contribution to our continent economic and social development.”*

<sup>1</sup> European Geostationary Navigation Overlay System

## **ABOUT ASECNA**

ASECNA is an international public organization. Its main mission is to provide air navigation services within an airspace of 16,500,000 square kilometers, divided into six flight information regions (F.I.R) as defined by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). ASECNA also develops solutions for airport management, aviation infrastructure studies and construction, equipment maintenance, calibration of air navigation instruments and training for civil aviation staff. Its 18 Member States are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, France, Gabon, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Chad and Togo.

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## **ABOUT THALES ALENIA SPACE**

Drawing on over 40 years of experience and a unique combination of skills, expertise and cultures, Thales Alenia Space delivers cost-effective solutions for telecommunications, navigation, Earth observation, environmental management, exploration, science and orbital infrastructures. Governments and private industry alike count on Thales Alenia Space to design satellite-based systems that provide anytime, anywhere connections and positioning, monitor our planet, enhance management of its resources, and explore our Solar System and beyond. Thales Alenia Space sees space as a new horizon, helping to build a better, more sustainable life on Earth. A joint venture between Thales (67%) and Leonardo (33%), Thales Alenia Space also teams up with Telespazio to form the parent companies’ Space Alliance, which offers a complete range of services. Thales Alenia Space posted consolidated revenues of approximately 1.85 billion euros in 2020 and has around 7,700 employees in 10 countries with 17 sites in Europe and a plant in the US.

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## **About NIGCOMSAT**

Nigerian Communications Satellite Ltd. (NIGCOMSAT) is a company and agency under the Federal Ministry of Communications and Digital Economy whose mission is to be the leading satellite operator and service provider in Africa. NIGCOMSAT Ltd. owns and operates the Nigerian communications satellite system. The company provides innovative and cutting-edge satellite communications solutions by operating and managing a geostationary communication satellite, NigComSat-1R, built to provide domestic and international satellite services via a 2-way satellite communications system across West, Central and Southeast Africa, as well as Europe and Asia. The satellite is a hybrid communication satellite with a payload for navigation overlay services (NOS) similar to EGNOS.

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**ABOUT GEOFLEX**

Geoflex is an innovative provider of cloud services, delivering improvements to GPS/GNSS applications to achieve positioning accuracy to within four centimeters on land, at sea and in the air. The company provides universal hyper-geolocation services for trains, cars, ships, drones, smartphones, etc., in conjunction with the main global players in these areas. Its hyper-geolocation system is based on a unique alliance between a portfolio of patents developed over a dozen years by French space agency CNES, and a seasoned team with over 30 years of experience in global navigation satellite systems. Geoflex was founded in 2012 by Romain Legros, a serial entrepreneur and a recognized expert in GNSS. The company is based in France, near Paris

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